

ISSUE #1

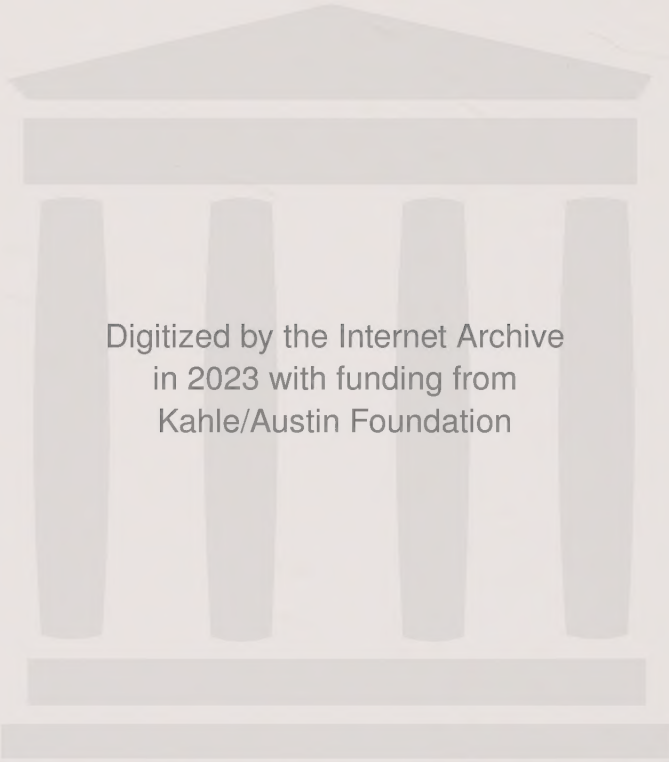
DANGER DAN



CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND



LESLEY-ANNE & MONICA LIM



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Praise for *Danger Dan Confronts the Merlion Mastermind*

“A fun story that also educates! Readers can learn good vocabulary and understand more about Singapore history as they join Danger Dan on his adventures.”

—Dr Tay Hui Yong, Vice-Principal,
Nanyang Girls' High School

“Singapore, get ready for your newest superhero as he stumbles his way into greatness...accidentally! *Danger Dan Confronts the Merlion Mastermind* is laugh-out-loud funny!”

—A.J. Low, author of *Sherlock Sam* series

“A refreshingly well-written book of adventure with lots of local flavour. A fun and engaging read for the whole family.”

—Zahira Mohd Sedik, Head of Department GEP
Humanities, St Hilda's Primary School



DANGER **DAN**



CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND

written by
Lesley-Anne & Monica Lim

illustrated by
James Tan



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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places,
and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination
or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons,
living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First Edition:

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For Andre and all other secret superheroes





CHAPTER

1

Danger Dan scans the terrain. The volcano is close to erupting and lava has already started flowing down the mountain. His headquarters is in sight, its anti-lava force field forming a pulsating blue orb. Clinging precariously to the side of the volcano, he inches forward slowly, moving sideways like a crab along the narrow rocky ledge. Every few minutes, the volcano rumbles, sending showers of rocks his way and threatening to knock him off balance.



He is in a dangerous situation.

But Danger Dan is no stranger to danger.

His watch beeps and shows a glowing red number '5'. Five minutes! Only five minutes to disaster! He is horrified to realise that lava has flowed right in front of him, blocking his path to the headquarters. Danger Dan glances around frantically. Then he spots it—a floating rocky island in the middle of the stream of lava. He springs away from the ledge, which crumbles immediately after his great leap. He lands expertly on the floating island and braces himself for one final jump towards his headquarters. If he aims well, he should make it safely onto the roof. Unfortunately, a huge boulder smashes into the floating island right at that moment, causing Danger Dan to fly through the air.

Will this be the end of Danger Dan?

CRASH!

Danny flopped onto the study table, sending pens and paper hurtling in all directions. “Yes! Danger Dan does it again!” rejoiced Danny, striking a Superman pose.

“You are such a wretched boy!” yelled Amy, Big Sister Number One who was 18 years old and trying to study for her ‘A’ level exams. She lunged at Danny’s arm, but he dodged just in time by rolling off the table. Amy didn’t exactly have the fastest reflexes. Her special feature was her Big Mouth. Amy was the star speaker on the school debating team which had won all the national debating championships for the past two years. Her motto was: If you can’t convince them, confuse them. She could talk circles around anyone.

“Stop bothering us, you pest!” squealed Betty, Big Sister Number Two who was 16 years old and trying to study for her ‘O’ level exams. She threw an eraser at Danny but missed completely. Betty didn’t exactly have the best aim. Her strength

was her Big Brain. Every year for the past four years, Betty had been the winner of the National Mathematical Olympiad, Science Olympiad and History Olympiad. She had also won the Home Economics Olympiad by whipping up a delicious bowl of fishball noodles using only her chemistry kit and some soya sauce.

“Why must you be such a pain?” growled Candy, Big Sister Number Three who was 12 years old and trying to study for her PSLE. Candy didn’t have a Big Mouth or a Big Brain. She was just...BIG. She represented her school team in judo and her opponents often prayed that they wouldn’t have to compete against her. She was as strong as a weightlifting elephant and had a terrifying flip that people commonly referred to as the ‘Candy Crush’.

The three of them looked around the room in disgust. Books were strewn across the floor having fallen off the bookcase that Danny had leapt from. A bulky volume of *The Complete*

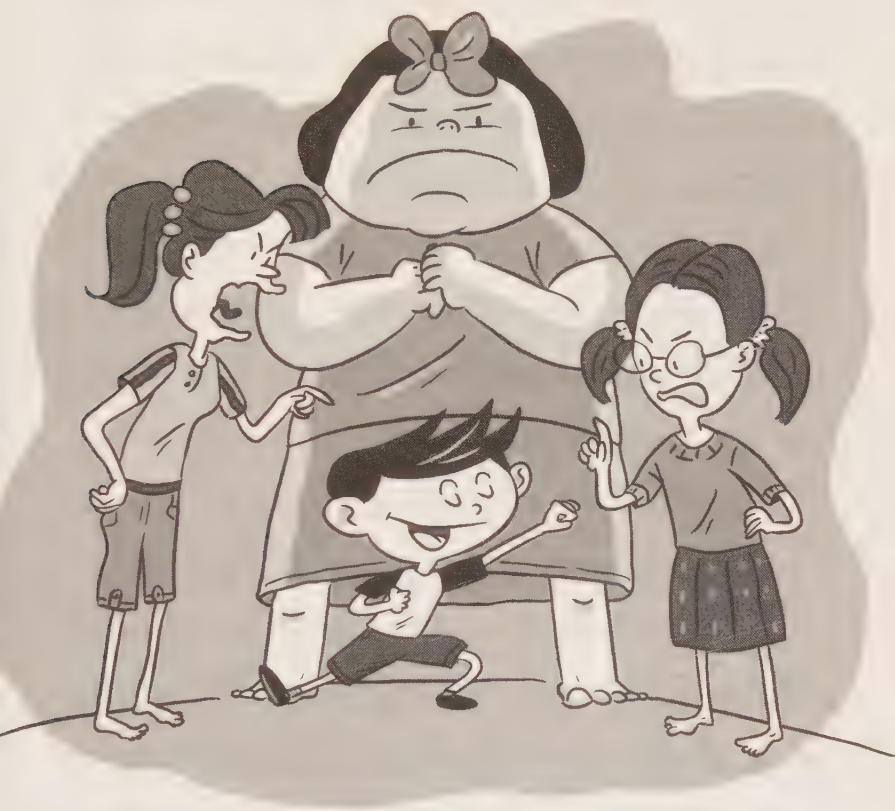
Works of William Shakespeare lay in the centre of the room. The rug that Danny had slipped on was scrunched up in a corner.

The only things that had escaped unscathed were the three display cabinets lining the wall. One held Amy's Debating Championship trophies, another showcased Betty's Olympiad certificates and the third exhibited Candy's judo medals. There was no cabinet for Danny because he had never won anything. Unless you counted the one time he won an ice cream-eating contest at his school funfair.

"Go away, Mickey Mouse," scoffed Candy.

"Stop calling me that!" shouted Danny. He stopped moving momentarily, his prominent ears turning red with rage. It was so unfair! Danny didn't have a Big Mouth or a Big Brain and he was nowhere close to being Big. Of all the Big features he could have possessed, Danny had Big Ears. (Actually, they weren't really that big but they stuck out at an unfortunate angle.)

“I’m not Mickey Mouse!” yelled Danny, putting his hands on hips. “I’m Danger Dan, Protector of the Universe!”



Candy looked at him menacingly and slowly stood up. Danny flinched and started to back away. He knew what it felt like to be ‘Candy Crushed’. He dashed out of the living room.

He heard Amy comment drily, “Oh look, it’s Run-Away-From-Danger Dan.” The other two sisters burst into uncontrollable giggles and Danny seethed with indignation. He hated being the youngest and the only boy in the family. It was always three against one and it didn’t help that he was a small and scrawny 11-year-old.

Danny’s mother called out from the dining room. “I need one of you to deliver this pack of herbs to Grandma.”

“I’m studying!” shouted Amy.

“I’m studying!” squawked Betty.

“I’m studying!” snarled Candy.

“Wait, wait, I’m...” Danny frantically tried to think up an excuse but his brain failed him.

“And we have a winner,” said his mother, coming towards him with a paper bag.

“No! No! You can’t make me do this! I have things to do! I’m busy with...er...er...” stammered Danny.

His mother ignored his protests. “Go on,” she insisted, thrusting the bag into his hand. “If you hurry, you can come home in time to finish your homework before dinner. Looks like it might rain, so better wear your jacket.”

Homework! He could have been ‘busy with homework’! Why didn’t he think of that? Silly brain!

Danny felt rather peeved that Danger Dan had to do something as ordinary as run errands. He grudgingly put on his red waterproof jacket and stuffed his wallet into a sling bag, along with his favourite *Fantasy Squad* comic book.

As he left the flat with his little red sling bag and the bag of herbs, Betty called out, “Have fun at Grandma’s, Little Red Riding Hood!” This triggered more howls of laughter. OOOOHHHH!!! He really wanted to strangle his sisters. One day, Danger Dan would show them!

Danny made his way to Toa Payoh MRT

station which was just a short walk away from his HDB flat. He didn't have to wait long for the train. It wasn't too crowded but only the reserved seats were not taken so Danny chose to stand. He stationed himself by a pole and started to read his comic.

Silver Wing streaks across New York's night sky. The Sinister Spy is holding the ElectriCannon, firing electric charges everywhere. Silver Wing folds in his eagle-like wings and his entire body changes to pure silver. He dives down headfirst towards the ElectriCannon at full speed.

The Sinister Spy shoots a huge charge of electricity towards Silver Wing.

ZAP!

Streaks of electricity deflect off Silver Wing and shoot up into the sky. Chunks of asphalt go flying and car windows shatter. Silver Wing reels from the impact but the Sinister Spy emerges unharmed.

“You may be able to fly like a bullet but your wings are no match for the force of my electric rays!” roars the Sinister Spy. “Say goodbye, Fantasy Squad. I will enjoy destroying you all!” He sends a brilliant bolt of lightning towards them.

In an instant, Flex Rex, the superdog, stretches out his elastic tail and wraps it around Cryptic. He rapidly uncurls his tail, catapulting Cryptic towards the lightning bolt. “Time for a change!” Cryptic hollers. Just before the lightning hits him, Cryptic shape-shifts into a large titanium shield.



The lightning ricochets off Cryptic and strikes back towards the ElectriCannon. It hits the ElectriCannon, which buzzes and slowly loses its glow. The weapon short-circuits, shakes unstably and releases a huge pulse of electricity. Electricity radiates through New York City, shorting out all

the power lines and street lamps. For a moment, the city is illuminated by a blinding white light. Then...darkness.

The only source of light is Energia. Her skin radiates a soft warm glow, while her green eyes shine like a cat's. She clasps her hands together and with a swift rolling motion, forms a bright orange energy orb. As the Sinister Spy frantically tries to restart the ElectriCannon, she throws the



energy orb right into the mouth of the cannon.

“Run!” she yells. The Fantasy Squad swiftly flees from the scene.

BOOM!

The orb explodes and destroys the ElectriCannon once and for all.



“Woohoo!” exclaimed Danny out loud in glee. “That thing is DA BOMB!”

“What thing? What bomb?” A sharp voice startled Danny. He looked up and saw an MRT official a few steps away, staring at him. “Hey,” the official signalled to another official behind him. “That boy said he has a bomb!” As the two men headed towards him, Danny was unnerved and backed away.

“Stop, boy!” shouted the first official. Danny turned and broke into a run. He nimbly weaved through the mass of astonished passengers and sprinted down the length of two carriages. The two officials were in hot pursuit and Danny was starting to feel desperate. Sooner or later, they would catch up with him.

Just then, he heard the automated MRT voice announce: “City Hall.” As the train doors opened, Danny vaulted out of the train without another thought. For a split second, he caught sight of a flash of wavy blue streaks on either

side of him. He heard a sound that reminded him of his toy soldiers being sucked up by his mother's vacuum cleaner.

FWWWWWWW

Danny glanced around. Instead of being on an MRT platform, he found himself in the middle of a large field, the vast blue sky above him.

Whaaatt...?



CHAPTER

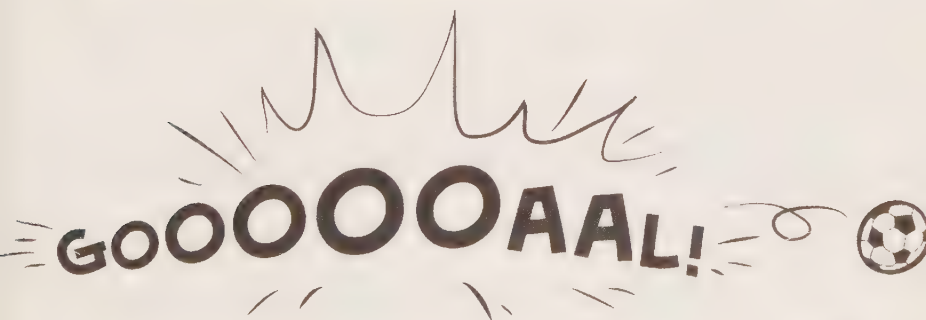
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Danny looked around, bewildered. He saw a goal post in the distance and realised that he was on a football field. Then he saw something else—a few strapping teenage boys were dashing towards him at top speed!

“Aaarrrrgggghhh!” Danny screamed. He turned and ran away as fast as he could. When he was nearing the end of the football field, a lean boy in a green, black and white shirt passed the soccer ball to him. “Shoot! Shoot!” he yelled.

Danny stared blankly at the ball in front of him. He glanced up and caught sight of the goalpost. Unfortunately, his moment's hesitation had cost him a clear shot at the goal and two muscular defenders now stood in his way. Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed a small, wiry boy waving at him. "Quick! Pass it to me!" the boy yelled. Without a second thought, Danny kicked the ball over.

Danny watched in amazement as the boy expertly dribbled the ball past one defender and outran the second. All that was left was a lone goalkeeper. The boy gave the ball a mighty kick and it whizzed through the air. It narrowly brushed past the goalkeeper's fingertips and spun straight into the white netting.



The whistle blew and cheers rang out. The teenagers went over to the boy to congratulate him. The two defenders looked rather sheepish at having been outplayed by a young boy who didn't look older than 12 years old.

"Thanks for passing me the ball!" said the boy, walking over to Danny. "Are you here for the soccer trials too? You're pretty good!" Danny couldn't help feeling a little proud. He didn't tell the boy that he hadn't been accepted into his school's soccer team.

"Maybe we can play on the same team in the future. Look out for me, okay?"

"Er...okay," replied Danny. As the boy walked away, Danny called out, "Oh wait, what's your name?"

"Kim Song," the boy smiled as he looked back. "Quah Kim Song."

The name sounded vaguely familiar but Danny had other things on his mind. How did he end up in the middle of a football match?

It made absolutely no sense. How on earth did he get here? As he retrieved his sling bag which had fallen onto the side of the field, a silvery voice chimed behind him.

“Hello, Danny.”

He swung around and found himself face to face with a girl. Well, almost face to face. She was practically one head taller than him so technically, it was face to neck. Her shoulder-length wavy hair framed her slim face and was pinned up to one side with a striking metallic silver hair clip that was in the shape of the letter ‘M’.

Danny gave her the once-over. Silver hair clip. Strawberry pink sports jacket. Purple skirt. Matching boots. Hmm. Must be a cheerleader.

“How do you know my name?” asked Danny suspiciously.

“Of course I know your name,” replied the girl. “I’m the one who brought you here.” She looked a little smug.

“What do you mean ‘here’? Where’s ‘here’? Oh and what happened to the MRT station? One minute it’s there, the next minute it’s gone!”

“The question you should be asking is ‘when’. I’m Melody and I’m from the future. I just brought you back in time.” Melody made a grand, sweeping gesture. “This is the year 1964.”

There was a full 10 seconds of silence as Danny stared at her, absorbing the information. Then his eyes widened. “Oh, I know! I’m being pranked, right? Hah! You can’t get me that easily! Nyeh nyeh ni boo boo!” Melody smacked her forehead as Danny stuck out his tongue and danced around her.

“Can you please stop moving for a minute and listen to me? I really AM from the future and this really IS 1964. I brought you back here because there was a time warp that changed an event in Singapore’s past and I need your help to make it right again.”

Danny stopped. Suddenly without warning,



he reached out and punched her arm.

“OWW!” Melody jumped backwards. “Why did you do that?”

“I wanted to see if you’re a ghost. Guess not.”

“Qwigglepuff! What on earth is wrong with you? That’s it. I’m sending you back and picking someone else.” She stalked off.

“Okay, sorry! I said sorry, okay?” said Danny, running after her hurriedly. “What were you

saying about the time warp?”

“I’m from way in the future and for some strange reason, I was caught in the middle of a time warp,” explained Melody. “As a result, I could see that one part of Singapore’s past had been accidentally changed. If it’s not fixed in time, the mistake will become permanent and affect Singapore’s present and future. I knew I couldn’t do this alone so I brought you back here to help me.”

“That’s so cool!” Danny could hardly believe his luck. This sounded exactly like the type of adventure Danger Dan would have. Melody and Danny walked along the football field, past a grand, colonial-style building. As they walked out the entrance, Danny spotted the words ‘Raffles Institution’ and ‘Founded 1823’ inscribed on the archway.

“Oh! We’re at RI? Their field is like 10 times bigger than my school field!” said Danny with admiration.

“Yeah, it’s pretty big,” agreed Melody as they walked out the school gate. “But forget about that for now. We have a very important mission to carry out.” Melody walked up to the kerb and Danny thought she was going to hail a taxi. Instead, she hailed...a trishaw.

“So what’s our mission?” asked Danny. The trishaw was dark green with bright red seats. The lanky trishaw uncle got off his sleek metal bicycle to pull the trishaw shade down. It was striped white and green, much like the peppermints Danny loved to eat. The two of them climbed on board.

“It’s the Merlion,” explained Melody authoritatively. “We have to fix the mistake or the Merlion will no longer exist! Van Kleef Aquarium, please, Uncle.” The trishaw man started peddling.

“So what if the Merlion didn’t exist?” asked Danny, thinking about the statue with the head of a lion and the tail of a fish. Even

though it represented Singapore, he didn't feel particularly attached to it. "Would it matter that much?"

"Yes," replied Melody, "if you've seen what it's going to be replaced with. Here's the background: the Merlion was designed by Alec Fraser-Brunner who worked at the Van Kleeef Aquarium. I think this guy probably loved fish so much that he decided to draw a lion with a fish's tail and ta-dah! The Merlion! Anyway, this design became the logo for the Singapore Tourism Board..."

Melody turned to Danny only to find that he had been staring at traffic. He was fascinated by all the types of cars that he had, till now, only seen in pictures. Watching them made him feel like he was in an old movie.

"Danny! Are you listening?"

"Of course I am!" said Danny impatiently. "This Smart Alec guy loved the fish in an aquarium on a cliff and he became the Merlion."

See? I was really listening!”

Melody gripped the side of the trishaw, exasperated. “He didn’t BECOME the Merlion, he DREW the Merlion! Anyway, because of the time warp, he never thought of the Merlion and is going to propose something completely different instead. That’s why we’re going to his office—”



“I thought we’re going to the aquarium on the cliff?” interrupted Danny.

“It’s not on a cliff!”

Danny was lost. “Why are we going to the aquarium that’s not on a cliff?”

Melody wanted to pull her hair out. “Ggggnnnnhhh! It’s the VAN KLEEF Aquarium! Alec Fraser-Brunner works there! We’re going there to make him change his design to the Merlion! Do you understand?”

“Er...I think so,” replied Danny. Actually, he didn’t but Melody looked like she was about to push him out of the trishaw so he decided to change the subject. “So how were you caught in the time warp? Were you struck by lightning? Did you have a time machine?” His eyes widened. “Or are you a superhero?”

Melody shook her head. “No, no, nothing like that. I don’t understand how or why it happened but I suddenly found myself rushing through time. It was like watching a movie

rewinding and fast forwarding right before my eyes. Totally weird.”

The trishaw ride was not as smooth as Danny thought it would be and he kept bumping into Melody. He was also perspiring profusely. He removed his red jacket and stuffed it in his sling bag. However, he was still warm and was surprised to see that Melody looked fresh in her long-sleeved jacket.

“How come you’re not sweating?” he asked.

“Forever Kool air-con jacket,” she replied. The smug look returned. “Limited edition with temperature control.”

“What? No way!”

“Yes way. I’m from the future, remember? We have all kinds of great gadgets.”

Danny was torn between admiration and envy. “That’s so cool! I wish I had one of those.” The trishaw stopped along the edge of a road, next to a park. “We’re here,” said Melody. “Now remember, I’ll do the talking. You just follow me!”

“Why can’t I tal—LOOK AT THAT!” shouted
Danny, pointing frantically.



CHAPTER



3

Danny rushed forward while Melody hastily paid the trishaw man. “What is it? What is it?” she asked, startled.

“A DRINKS CART!” exclaimed Danny. “I am SO thirsty!” The small, wooden drinks pushcart was just what he needed. Danny was craving an icy cold drink to cool himself down. He ran towards the cart, past the groups of school children waiting around the many shady trees and colourful flowerbeds in the gardens.

The pushcart's counter was lined with a row of bottled drinks—Pepsi-Cola, F&N Orange and some others that Danny was not familiar with. He was about to ask for an orange-coloured drink called Green Spot when the Indian man behind the cart smiled at him and asked, “Ice ball for you, boy?”

“Ice ball?” Danny's curiosity was piqued. “Yes, please!” Just then, Melody caught up with him. “What are you doing?” asked Melody crossly. “We need to go now! Time is of the essence!”

“Chicken essence?” Danny thought of the tonic his mother always made him drink during exam periods and made a face. “Yuck! An ice ball sounds much more delicious. I want an ice ball!”

“Gggnnnnnnhhh! Not chicken essence!” Melody gritted her teeth.

“That's what I said!” Danny nodded in agreement. “An ice ball is much better!” Melody gave up arguing with Danny. They watched as the man worked the ice shaving machine. Shaved



ice spilled out and fell into his cupped hand. He expertly moulded the ice into the shape of a bowl and filled it with red beans, gleaming green jelly and a small white fruit. More ice topped it off and the man shaped the whole slushy mountain into an ice ball. To Danny, it looked like the world's biggest, most perfect snowball.

But the man wasn't finished yet. He proceeded to ladle various coloured syrups onto the ice and drizzled condensed milk on top of it all. The frosty ice ball was tinged with green, brown and red, and looked like an orb of refreshing ice kacang, Danny's favourite dessert which he always ordered at hawker centres.

The man plopped the ice ball into Danny's hands. "Ten cents," he said. Danny looked at the glistening, sugary ball. "Oh, err...it doesn't come in a cup?"

The man turned to Melody. "You want one, girl?" Melody looked at the ice ball in Danny's hand. It had already begun to drip. "No, thank

you!” said Melody brightly and paid the man. She hissed at Danny, “Let’s go!”

Danny sucked on the ice ball as they trotted towards a large, rectangular white building. A wide, red brick path with steps led up to the main entrance. Danny’s ice ball was wonderfully sweet and refreshingly cold. He couldn’t think of a better treat on a hot day. “Mmmm...this is even better than ice cream!”

SLURP

Danny couldn’t stop sucking on the ice ball. Suddenly, he thought of a question he had been meaning to ask Melody. “So *slurrrrp* why did you pick me to help you in this mission?”

“You want to be a superhero, right?” replied Melody. “I thought I’d give you a chance. Anyway, nobody else will believe a story like this, especially not adults.”

Danny’s eyes lit up. “You mean, *slurrrrp* I’m the Chosen One? Yes! Finally! Fame! Fortune! Just wait till my *slurp* sisters hear about this!”

“No, no, you can’t tell anyone!” warned Melody. “This has to be our secret, otherwise we might create more mistakes in the time warp!”

“Whaaatt?” wailed Danny. “Where’s the fun in that?”

“Well,” consoled Melody, “all superheroes have a secret identity, right?”

SLURP

“That’s true,” pondered Danny. He cheered up. “Danger Dan goes undercover as he saves the Merlion! Nothing can stop him! He’s the Defender of Destiny! *slurp* Rescuer of the Republic! *slurp* Time Traveller of Toa Payoh!”

SLURP

Danny turned to Melody and said generously, “You can be my helpful assistant, Mad Melody.”

“UURRRGHHHH! You qwirklehead! And stop making those loud slurping noises, please!”

“What?” Danny looked a little hurt. “I said you were helpful, didn’t I?” He continued

sucking on his ice ball but very, very softly.

“I’m nobody’s assistant! And I’m most definitely not mad!”

“Well, you look pretty mad to me.” In fact, Danny could almost see smoke coming out of Melody’s ears. “Okay, okay, you can be Gadget Girl. Happy?”

Melody shot him a searing look. “Can you please focus?” she snapped. “We’re here to look for Mr Fraser-Brunner.” They reached the lobby of the white building, which had ‘Van Kleef Aquarium’ inscribed on its façade. They walked towards the entrance of the exhibition area which was being manned by a burly security guard.

Melody put on her most polite voice. “Please, sir, can you tell us where Mr Fraser-Brunner’s office is?”

“Why are you looking for him?” asked the security guard brusquely.

“We have something very important to

discuss with him,” replied Melody.

“Discuss with him?” scoffed the security guard. “More like bother him! He’s a very important man. He doesn’t have time to discuss anything with you children. Go on now.”

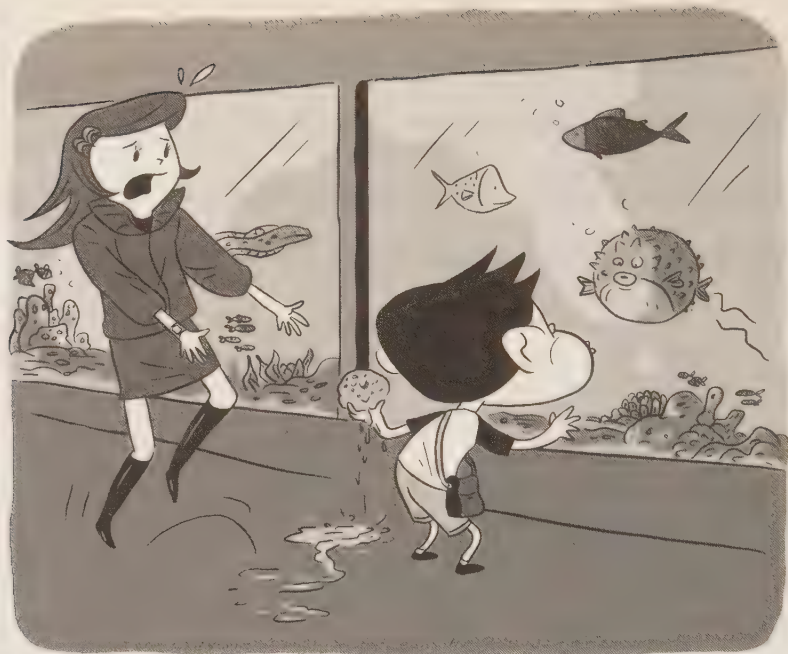
“Please, sir, it’s very important!” appealed Danny, as he made a frantic gesture with his hands. Unfortunately, some droplets of syrup from his ice ball sprinkled onto the security guard’s uniform. The guard glanced at his uniform in disgust and pointed at Danny’s half-eaten ice ball. “You’re not allowed in! Not with that. No eating in here!”

Melody pulled Danny aside. “Don’t worry. We’ll find another way of getting in,” she whispered. They waited in the lobby until a large group of students in their school uniforms gathered. “Come on, boys and girls,” called the teacher-in-charge. “Follow me. We’re going in to see the exhibits.”

Danger Dan and Gadget Girl spot a large army entering the Underwater Fortress. This is their chance to enter the forbidden castle of Villainous Van Kleef! Blending in, they sneak in undetected. Success!

Inside the aquarium, many display tanks were built into the walls, featuring numerous species of fish and exotic sea creatures. Special lights illuminated the tanks and gave them an unusual glow, creating a magical effect in the darkened rooms of the aquarium. “Wow, check this out!” exclaimed Danny, running from tank to tank. “An electric eel! Look, there’s even a baby shark!”

Villainous Van Kleef has taken all the sea creatures prisoner! Evil sharks guard the entrances so no fish can escape. Danger Dan realises that the electricity that powers the Underwater Fortress comes from the imprisoned electric eels. A lonely puffer fish recognises him. “Please save us, Danger Dan!” it puffs. Danger Dan promises to free them all.



“We’re not here to look at fish, remember?” reminded Melody. She looked at Danny’s ice ball which was disintegrating in earnest, leaving behind a wet trail on the floor. “And you’re making an awfully big mess.”

Danny ignored her and peered into a low tank set up on a table in the middle of the room. The plaque next to it was marked, ‘Children’s Interactive Exhibit’. “Ooh, a starfish!” he pointed excitedly. As he leaned over the tank to get a closer look, his ice ball dripped onto

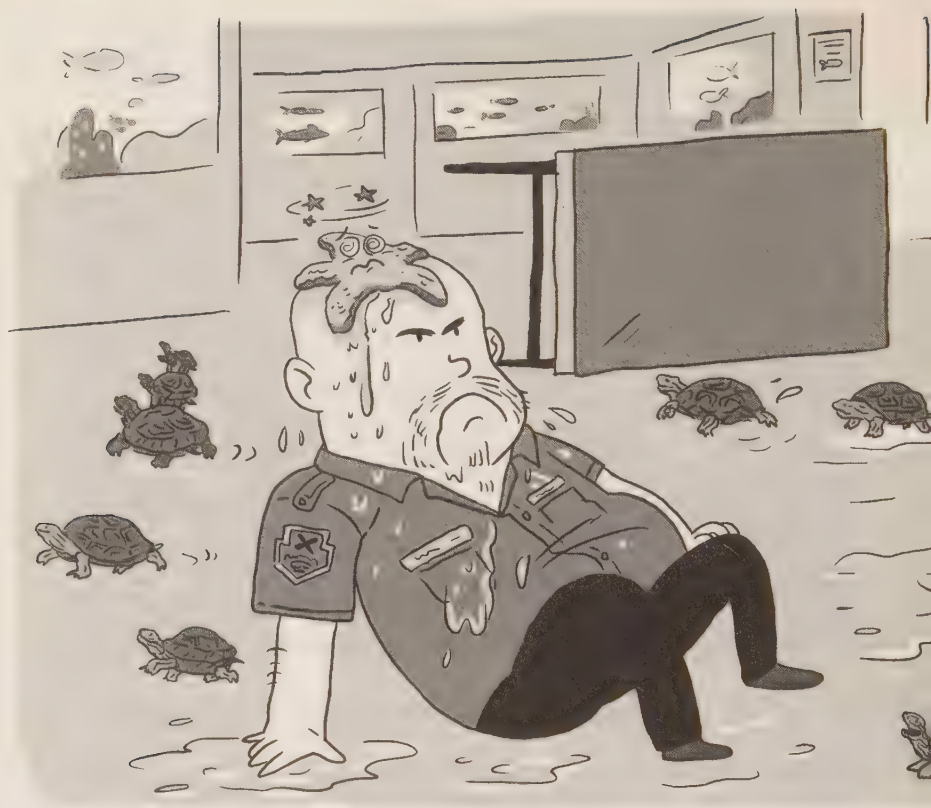
the unlucky starfish. The light beige starfish now had a sticky, bright pink splotch. "Oops!"

Danny used his free hand to pick up the starfish and tried to wipe away the incriminating mark. Right at that moment, the security guard appeared in the room. "Oi! You!" he shouted, running towards Danny. "I told you: no eating in here!"

Several things happened at once. Melody seized Danny's arm and the starfish flew out of Danny's wet, syrupy fingers. The security guard slipped on the wet traces of the ice ball on the floor and skidded towards the tank. In a desperate attempt to stop, he grabbed at the table.

CRASH!

The table overturned, toppling the tank and everything in it. Some 50 terrapins, released from their enclosure, scuttled in all directions



with surprising speed. Water, rocks and sand slushed onto the floor. To top it all off, the airborne starfish landed right on top of the security guard's bald head.

"OHHHHH!! You...you...!" spluttered the security guard. Visitors screamed hysterically and scrambled out of the room, trying to avoid stepping on the travelling terrapins. With some



difficulty, the security guard struggled to his feet and pried the starfish from his head. “Come on, help me!” barked the security guard, trying to set the table upright. Melody and Danny snapped out of their stupor and sprang into action.

Terrapins scuttle in all directions. They need water but Villainous Van Kleef has denied them any.



"We need to help them!" cries Gadget Girl. Danger Dan and Gadget Girl quickly transfer the terrapins to a water-filled tank. "You're safe for now, my reptilian friends," whispers Danger Dan. "We'll come back to free you when we can!"

Eventually, they managed to return most of the items but even Danny had to admit it wasn't quite the same pretty display it was before. In his haste, he had also dropped his ice ball (or what was left of it) into the tank. It was a sorry sight.

Breathing heavily, the security guard stood by the tank and surveyed the slimy mess left on the ground. "At least we got the animals back." He turned to the children. "Can you please go now?"

"Tell us where Mr Fraser-Brunner is first," bargained Danny. "Otherwise I'm going from room to room until I find him!" The security guard opened his mouth. Then he sighed and replied wearily, "Fine, fine. His office is on

the second floor. Take the staircase in the lobby. Just promise me you won't come back in here, okay?"

"We promise!" chirped Danny. "Come on, Melody, let's go." The two children scampered out of the room, leaving the security guard shaking his head. They arrived back at the lobby and located the staircase behind a pillar.

"I learnt something new today," mused Melody as they walked up the stairs. "The best way to get people to do something is to threaten them with Disaster Dan."

"The name is Danger Dan!" said Danny indignantly. He frowned. "Hey, wait a minute! Did you just insult me?" On the second floor, they found themselves at the start of a long corridor, with rows of offices on both sides. They didn't have far to go though. The very first door bore the sign: 'Alec Fraser-Brunner, Curator'.





CHAPTER



Melody knocked on the door and the two of them entered the office cautiously. A middle-aged secretary sat behind a desk. She had a pinched face and a sourpuss mouth. Her hair was permed and teased into a massive beehive style and she wore black-rimmed glasses that pointed up at the ends. Danny thought she looked like an electrocuted bat woman.

“Yes?” she sniffed haughtily.

“We’re looking for Mr Fraser-Brunner,”

said Melody politely.

“He’s not here,” replied the secretary. “Why are you looking for him?”

“It’s quite urgent. We need to talk to him. Can you tell us where he is?”

“Who are you?” asked the secretary. She narrowed her eyes in suspicion. “Did John send you? You’re here to steal his designs, aren’t you? You’re spies!”

Danny thought the secretary quite mad. “We’re children!” he cried. “How can we be spies?”

“That’s what they all say! Tell John he can’t fool me so easily just because he sends children! Shoo! Shoo!”

Melody and Danny left the office in a hurry, closing the door behind them. “Why are all the adults in this place so mean and grumpy?” wondered Danny. “What do we do now?”

“There was an appointment book on the secretary’s desk,” said Melody. “We just need

to take a look at it. I'm sure she would have written down where Mr Fraser-Brunner is." Triumphantly, Melody showed Danny what was in her hand. "I managed to snag a name card. Hang on." She removed her large, silver hair clip.

"What are you doing?"

"What does it look like I'm doing? I'm going to make a phone call."

"You mean that's a phone?" asked Danny, his mouth open in astonishment.

"A phone? This is not JUST a phone! It's a mega all-in-one computer. It reads my brain waves so I can find any information and do all kinds of actions just by thinking. Latest model with 15 zettabytes of memory space."

"Zettabytes?" Danny had never heard of that word. "How many gigabytes is that?"

"Gigabytes?" Melody looked at Danny pityingly. "I forgot you're still living in the Stone Age. One zettabyte is 1,000,000,000,000

gigabytes. Anyway, I'm going to call the number on the card. I'll try to lure the secretary out of the room so that we can take a peek at the appointment book." Melody fiddled with her hair clip. "Uh-oh."

"What? What is it now?"

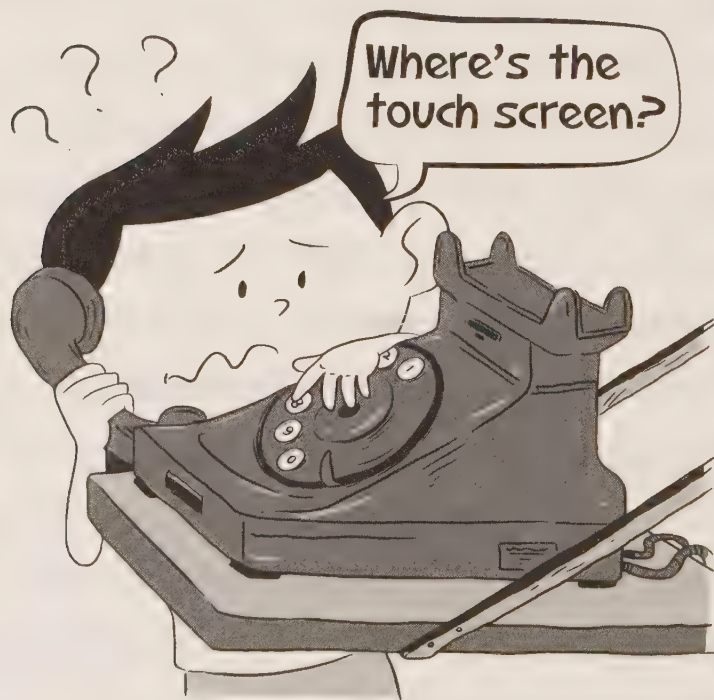
"No signal."

"Are you kidding?" Danny was amazed. "Such a fancy gadget with zettabytes that can read minds and it still needs a signal? That's so lame!"

"Stop complaining! Come on. We have to find a public phone." Melody re-fastened the hair clip on her hair and the two of them went back downstairs to the aquarium lobby. They spotted the phone almost immediately. It was sitting on an old wooden ledge next to a bulky, worn out volume of Yellow Pages. It had a black receiver and on the face of the phone was a large circular ring with small holes indicating the numbers one to zero.

Danny lifted the receiver. “How does this work? There are no buttons! Where are the buttons?”

“Give me that,” said Melody, snatching the receiver from Danny. She inserted a coin into the coin slot, stuck her finger into the hole at number two and turned the dial. She waited for the dial to whirr back to its original position before dialling the next number.



“Gosh!” exclaimed Danny, smacking his forehead. “What ancient device is this?”

Melody gestured for Danny to be quiet. She heard the secretary’s scratchy voice through the receiver.

“Hello, Alec Fraser-Brunner’s office.”

“Hello,” Melody replied, trying to lower her voice so she would sound more like an adult. “Excuse me, Miss, but you’re needed urgently downstairs! There’s been an accident at the Children’s Interactive Exhibit and you need to report it to Mr Fraser-Brunner.”

“What! Alright, alright, I’m on my way.”

Melody hung up the phone and gave a delighted whoop. “Yes! Score!” Melody and Danny waited inconspicuously by the side until they saw the secretary hurry past into the aquarium. Seizing the opportunity, they dashed back up the stairs to Mr Fraser-Brunner’s office.

However, their glee turned to dismay

when Melody tried the knob on the door. "She locked it!"

"Drats!" said Danny. He looked at Melody hopefully. "Can you make yourself thin and stretchy like Flex Rex? Then you can just slip under the door!"

"I told you I'm not a superhero!" snapped Melody. "Wait!" She suddenly perked up. "You just gave me an idea." Melody unhooked the pendant from the necklace she was wearing. Danny had thought it was a butterfly but on closer look, he realised it was a fly. "What does that do?" asked Danny eagerly.

"It's called the Fly on the Wall, or Fly for short," explained Melody. "It is a flying robot with a tiny wireless camera called the Fly-Cam. I use my hair clip as a remote control and projector. The projector will display a hologram to let us see and hear what's going on."

She slipped the Fly under the door. Her hair clip projected a red hologram showing

them the view of the office from the Fly-Cam. Danny watched intently while Melody fiddled with the controls.

The Fly zipped across the office before hovering over the secretary's desk. On it was an open black book.

"There it is! Bat woman's appointment book," whispered Danny. "Go closer." Before Melody could adjust the Fly, the children heard the clackety-clack of high heels coming up the steps.

"She's coming back!" hissed Melody in alarm. "Quick, hide!" The two of them ran towards the nearest door opposite Fraser-Brunner's office. Thankfully, it was unlocked and they found themselves in a dark storage room. Leaving the door open just a crack, they saw the secretary unlock Fraser-Brunner's office and enter it.

"Phew! That was close," said Danny as the children cautiously came out of the storage

room. Melody re-projected the hologram with her hair clip and continued controlling the Fly. Unfortunately, the secretary was now seated at her desk and no matter where Melody moved the Fly, its view was blocked by the secretary's poufy hair.

"Ooohh...I hate her hair," muttered Melody. She shifted the Fly closer to the secretary and zoomed in with the Fly-Cam, hoping to get a good look at Fraser-Brunner's appointment book. Just then, the hologram showed the image of a massive hand approaching them.



The Fly-Cam was sent reeling. "Yikes!" Melody fumbled over the controls but it was no use. The out-of-control Fly continued to somersault through the air before spiralling downwards. Danny watched in alarm. He was afraid the delicate Fly would break when it hit the hard tiled floor.

“Don’t you ever play computer games?” asked Danny agitatedly. He snatched the hair clip from Melody and started to work the controls. The Fly swerved upwards just in time. It spun around once before flying back towards the secretary. Melody was secretly quite impressed.



Danger Dan expertly circles the Fly around the evil Bat woman. He tilts the Fly and its wings brush against the Bat woman’s scowling face. The

Bat woman is angry and she takes a huge swipe at the Fly. "Engaging evasive manoeuvres!" Danger Dan works furiously at the controls and the Fly accurately swoops in between the Bat woman's fingers, escaping unharmed. "Haha! You can't catch me!" teases Danger Dan, as he twists and turns the Fly to avoid all of Bat woman's swats.


By now, the secretary was completely obsessed with trying to shoo the fly away but her efforts were in vain. Melody stifled her laughter as she watched the secretary flail her arms around randomly. The secretary soon gave up. Looking very flustered, she left her desk to make herself a cup of coffee.

Now was their chance! Danny positioned the Fly above the open page of the appointment book and zoomed in on it. The Fly-Cam perfectly captured the handwritten entry: Thursday, 3.30pm: Queen Elizabeth Walk.

"I've got it!" trumpeted Danny. "Take that,

you evil Bat woman! You're no match for Danger Dan!" He turned the Fly around and flew it back out from underneath the door.

Melody re-attached the Fly to her chain. "Qwintastic!" she said. "Now let's get out of here."



CHAPTER

5

“Drats!” exclaimed Melody, looking at her watch. “It’s already 3.30pm! We’ve got to hurry or we may miss him.” Melody and Danny hurried down the stairs and out of the building.

“Is Queen Elizabeth Walk close by?” asked Danny, running to keep up with Melody. Not for the first time, he wished he had longer legs.

“It’s further up from RI. We have to go back to where we came from,” replied Melody, to which

Danny groaned. “What? We have to take another trishaw? It’s so hot! Don’t you have a Hoverjet or something?”

“Stop complaining!” said Melody crossly. “A trishaw is cheap and easy. I don’t have enough 1960s money for a taxi.” They walked across the park towards the road where there was no shortage of trishaws. Melody hailed one with a beige top and red checkered seat. The two children climbed on board.

Even though the shade was up, it didn’t totally shield Danny from the afternoon sun and he grew unbearably warm. The exhaust from the passing cars and heat rising from the roads didn’t help. Danny’s T-shirt was soaked with perspiration and it stuck uncomfortably to his skin.

“I’m hot. Sooooo hot,” moaned Danny. “Hot. Hot-hot-hot-hot-hot.” Melody ignored him. He began to sing mournfully under his breath:

“If you’re hot and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're hot and you know it, clap your hands. If you're hot and you know it, your sweaty face will surely show it. If you're hot and you know it, clap your hands."

Melody sat next to him, stone-faced. After a moment of silence, Danny continued, "If you're hot and you know it, stamp your fee—"

"WILL YOU STOP THAT!" screeched Melody, startling the trishaw man who swerved to avoid the kerb.

"But I'm HAAWWT..." complained Danny. "I know! Can I borrow your air-con jacket?" Danny showed Melody his most innocent, puppy dog eyes but it didn't work.

"NO! Just keep quiet!"

Danny sighed. Suddenly, he grabbed Melody's sleeve and lifted it to his face.

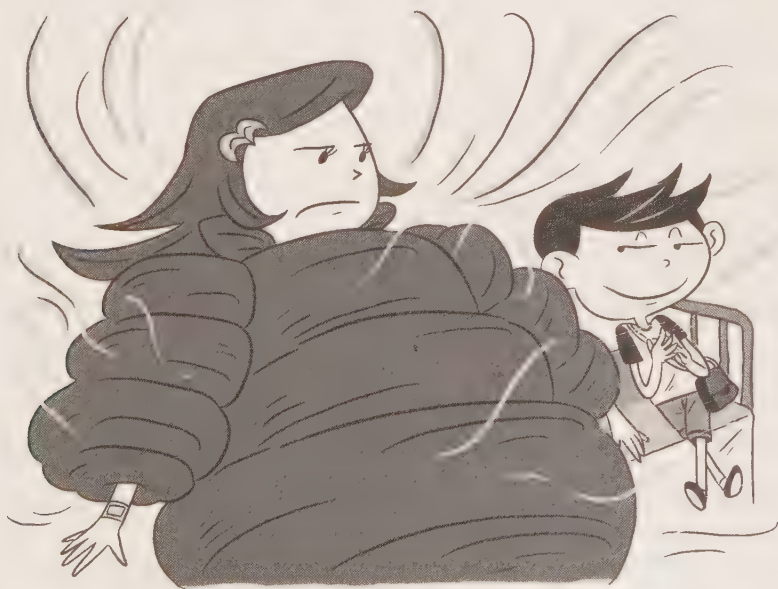
"What on earth are you doing now?"

"Trying to get some of the Kool air." Danny spotted the temperature control cuff on Melody's sleeve. "Hey! What does this do?"

Before she could stop him, Danny had pressed the button that said 'Maximum Kool Blast'.

POOF!

Melody's air-con jacket inflated due to the sudden rush of cold air. It made her look rather ridiculous. She jerked her arm back and adjusted the temperature back to "Medium Kool". She glared at Danny. "I should have picked a monkey to help me! I'm sure a monkey would have been less annoying than you."



To appease her, Danny changed the subject. "You never told me how old you are," he asked. "Which year in the future are you from?"

"I'm 14. And I'm from the year 2135."

Danny's mind was blown. "Whoa! That must mean you're like 1,000 years old!"

Melody raised an eyebrow. "First of all, your Maths is terrible. Secondly, you've got it upside down. I'm young and you are the one who's old. You'll be long dead by the time I'm born."

"Whaatt?" Danny looked stunned. "I'll be DEAD?"

Melody was lost for words. She cupped her face as if she had a headache. Thankfully, they soon arrived at their destination. They got out of the trishaw and Melody paid the trishaw man.

Queen Elizabeth Walk was a pretty and peaceful stretch. People were strolling down the wide brick path which was lined with trees

and flowers. Over the railing, Danny could see many bumboats on the Singapore River.

“It’s already 4pm,” said Melody anxiously, checking her watch. “I hope he hasn’t left!” Danny and Melody ran down the path, keeping their eyes peeled for anyone who might be Fraser-Brunner. They finally came to a grey-haired Caucasian man with glasses, standing by the railing. He was drawing in his sketchbook. “That must be him!” said Melody.

They went up to him and Melody enquired, “Hi there, Mr Alec Fraser-Brunner?” The man turned around and looked at the two children. “Yes?” he asked, puzzled. Finally! They had found him!

Melody beamed. “Mr Fraser-Brunner, we know you work at the Van Kleeef Aquarium and understand that you do design as well. We’re great admirers of your work and were wondering if you could share with us what you’re sketching.”

“Oh!” Fraser-Brunner looked surprised. “I didn’t know I had fans. It’s so nice to meet students interested in design. Since you both like my work, I’ll share a secret with you. I’m working on a new design for a logo. Maybe in time, it will come to represent Singapore. Want to see it?”

Danny and Melody nodded. Fraser-Brunner turned his sketchbook to face them and proudly displayed his masterpiece. “Here it is—the Orchid de Lionhead!”

The two children stared at the drawing of a lion with a mane of gigantic bright purple orchid petals. The lion had an open mouth and flared nostrils. Its slightly surprised expression made it look like it was about to sneeze. It also had one raised paw as if trying to swat an imaginary fly. To top it all off, the lion’s tail stood straight up like a flag pole.

Danny couldn’t take his eyes off the drawing. He blurted out, “Ohhh! That’s the



ugliest thing I've ever seen!"

Fraser-Brunner was terribly offended. If looks could kill, Danny would have dropped dead on the spot. Fraser-Brunner slammed his

sketchbook shut and stuffed it in his satchel.

“Mr Fraser-Brunner, wait!” said Melody desperately, glaring daggers at Danny. Fraser-Brunner ignored her and slung his satchel over his shoulder. He turned to leave.

Everything that happened next occurred so quickly that it caught both Melody and Danny by surprise. A bicycle whizzed past them and they saw Fraser-Brunner lurch backwards. He lost his balance and tumbled to the ground, sprawled on his back like an overturned turtle. Danny and Melody stood there dazed. It took them several seconds to realise what had just taken place. The man on the bicycle had snatched Fraser-Brunner’s satchel!


Fraser-Brunner struggled to his feet, rubbing his sore shoulder. “Oi! He took my satchel! Quick, my satchel! Quick, quick!” he babbled and stumbled after the thief. Danny and Melody quickly ran after Fraser-Brunner even though they were rather bewildered.

“What just happened?” Danny shouted to Melody who was running next to him. “Why are we running? Where? What? Huh?”

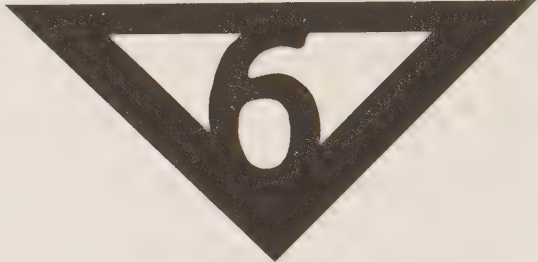
Melody yelled in reply, “We can’t lose Fraser-Brunner again! Just follow him!” Queen Elizabeth Walk didn’t seem quite so peaceful any more. Fraser-Brunner was surprisingly fast for an elderly man. But even he was no match for a bicycle.

The thief increased his lead. At the end of Queen Elizabeth Walk, he sped into an underpass. Sweating and panting, the pursuers followed suit. Their heavy footsteps clanged loudly on the metal sheeting and echoed off the walls of the tunnel.

By the time they emerged from the underpass, the thief was nowhere to be seen.



CHAPTER



6

“Where did he go?” asked Danny, looking around wildly.

“He must have gone that way!” cried Fraser-Brunner, running towards Victoria Theatre ahead.

“Wait! But...what if he went over there...?” Melody spluttered. Determined not to let Fraser-Brunner slip away from them, she made an instant decision. “Never mind! Danny, you follow him! I’ll check out the building on this side!”

Danny began to protest but Melody had already dashed off. "Aarrrggh! Why do you get to tell me what to do?" he muttered as he ran after Fraser-Brunner. "Fine, here I come."

Danger Dan is on the prowl! The hunt is on for the briefcase of secret documents. Danger Dan glares at Agent Orchid de Lionhead for having the top secret documents snatched from right under his nose. If they don't retrieve the documents, the Sinister Spy will be able use the codes to blow up the world!

The bronze statue of Sir Stamford Raffles caught Danny's eye. He paused and imagined it was a statue of Danger Dan, built by the city in his honour. Folding his arms, he struck the same pose as the statue.

DONG! DONG! DONG! DONG! DONG!

The city clock tower strikes five. Time is running out! Admiring the statue will have to wait. For now,



Danger Dan must track down the Sinister Spy who may be hiding in the old, abandoned theatre.

Danger Dan and Agent Orchid de Lionhead scale the decrepit wooden staircase leading to the theatre. The wood is rotting and every step creaks. Moving like an elephant, Agent Orchid de Lionhead heavily lumbers to the top of the stairs. Danger Dan stumbles as the entire staircase shudders.

Halfway up Victoria Theatre's grand staircase, Danny's shoelace came undone, causing him to trip and bump his knee painfully on the stairs. Pulling himself up on the smooth banister, he limped after Fraser-Brunner. On the second floor, Fraser-Brunner stopped in front of a pair of large doors. "Maybe he is hiding inside," he said. Danny gave the heavy door a push. It wasn't locked and they entered the main auditorium.

Agent Orchid de Lionhead searches in between the theatre's rows of dusty seats for

the Sinister Spy. "Agent Orchid de Lionhead, this place is deserted. Are you sure the Sinister Spy is here?" asks Danger Dan doubtfully. Just then, Danger Dan's supersonic hearing picks up on some strange music. It is very faint and seems to be coming from backstage. He signals to Agent Orchid de Lionhead to follow him.

It is dark backstage except for a faint light coming from a dressing room. Danger Dan puts on his night vision goggles and is surprised by what he sees. A musician is playing a mournful song on a tuba. This must be the performer that was kidnapped by the Sinister Spy!

The musician starts to play a rhythmic tune. Danger Dan suspects that the musician may be trying to communicate in code. But Danger Dan has no time to decipher codes. He has to find the Sinister Spy first.

Just then, a large hand grips Danger Dan's shoulder.

Danger Dan spins around and comes face to

face with the Malicious Minion, the Sinister Spy's henchman. "You have no right to be here!" he bellows. The Malicious Minion is very fast and strong. He skilfully has Agent Orchid de Lionhead and Danger Dan in a stronghold. He drags them back downstairs and with a violent shove, throws them out of the theatre.

A stagehand escorted Danny and Fraser-Brunner out of the theatre. Danny looked at Fraser-Brunner and asked accusingly, "Why did we even go into the theatre? The thief was on a bicycle! How could he have hidden there?"

Fraser-Brunner looked thoughtful. "You know, I didn't think of that..."

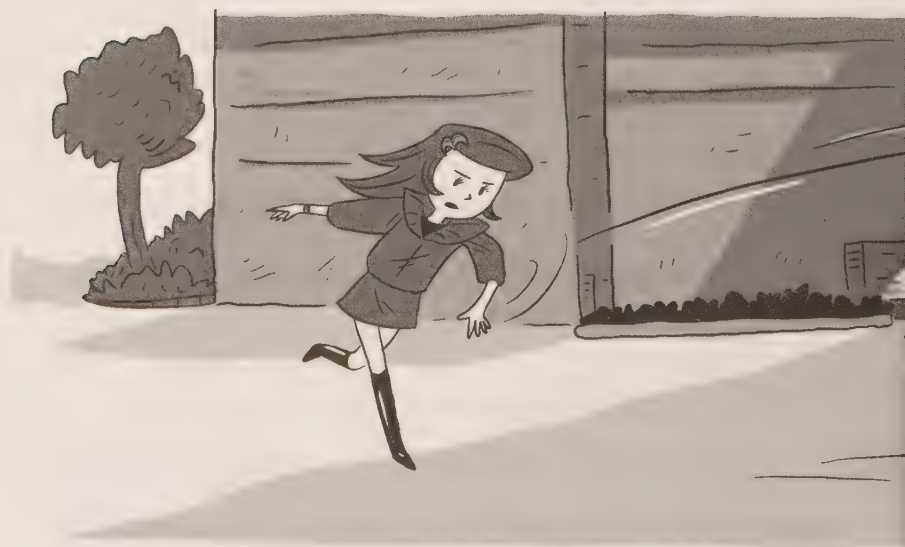
Drats! Foiled by the Sinister Spy! Now all hopes rest on Gadget Girl!



Melody ran to a massive white building to the left of Sir Stamford Raffles' statue but saw

only a couple of passers-by. She walked the length of the building's front façade before she had a thought: Maybe he's hiding behind the building. She decided to check it out.

As Melody turned the corner towards the back of the building, she suddenly stopped in her tracks. The thief was just a few steps ahead of her! He had gotten off his bicycle to examine the contents of the stolen satchel. A cap partially hid his face and his metal watch glinted in the sunlight. Each of them spotted the other at the same time. Melody and the thief stared at



each other. Both were equally taken aback.

“You!” yelled Melody when she had recovered from her surprise, starting towards the thief. Regaining his composure, the thief scrambled back onto his bicycle to make his getaway.

“NOOOOO!” screamed Melody in frustration. She knew she would never be able to catch him on his bicycle and she was already starting to feel tired. Without thinking, she grabbed a rock from the ground and flung it at the bicycle with all her might. Melody had never been a good shot but to her utter amazement,



the rock hit its mark, striking the bicycle's rear wheel. The bicycle veered out of control and the thief crashed to the ground.

Much to Melody's annoyance, the thief nimbly got to his feet, grabbed the satchel and dashed off on foot. "Man, this guy never gives up!" grumbled Melody, sprinting after him. She lost sight of him again when he turned the next corner. She was certain he was hiding behind one of the building's many pillars. As she ran about checking behind the pillars, she saw, from the corner of her eye, a bicycle zipping past her. The thief had somehow eluded her and gone back to retrieve his bike!

Melody gave chase. The thief rode onto Cavenagh Bridge. Exhausted, Melody shouted desperately, "STOP! Police! Stop right there!"

To her horror, instead of stopping, the thief unslung the satchel with one hand and threw it over the bridge. He then sped away.



CHAPTER



“HELP! NEED HELP! H-E-L-P!!” Melody’s loud appeals caught the attention of Danny and Fraser-Brunner who were wandering around outside Victoria Theatre, searching for the thief. She waved madly at them. Seeing Melody, they rushed over and peered over the railing to the spot where she was pointing. The strap of Fraser-Brunner’s satchel was caught on a wooden beam protruding out from the edge of the bridge. It dangled dangerously over the Singapore River.

“Oh no! My bag! My precious drawings!” yelped Fraser-Brunner.

“Can’t you do something?” Danny urged Melody.



“Qwigglepuff! What am I supposed to do?” retorted Melody. “Do you think my arms are that long?”

“But you’re Gadget Girl!” cried Danny. “Don’t you have anything that can make you fly? Like Silver Wing?”

“No! Do you expect me to just magically swoop down and get the bag?”

“What about something long and stretchy?” persisted Danny. “Can you make your arm elastic like Flex Rex? Then you can just reach down and grab the bag!”

“NO! I told you I’m not a superhe...Wait a minute! You may be right. I do have something stretchy.”

Melody rolled up her right sleeve. On her wrist was what looked like an ordinary, black digital watch. She pressed a small, triangular purple button and the watch’s screen opened up. Melody aimed the watch downwards at the satchel and pressed the purple button again.

A sleek, silver grappling hook shot out of the watch but missed the satchel completely.

“More to the left!” directed Danny. Melody retracted the wire and took aim once again. This time, the grappling hook latched onto the satchel. “That’s great!” said Danny. “Now pull it up!”

Melody pressed the purple button again to retract the wire. Unfortunately, the hook did not have a secure grip on the bag. When the wire recoiled, the satchel slipped off the grappling hook and slid further out onto the edge of the beam. Fraser-Brunner turned pale. “No!” gasped the elderly man.

“Yikes! It’s going to drop!” said Danny anxiously. “Give it to me! Let me try.” Nervously, Melody removed her watch and handed it to Danny.

Danger Dan has only 10 seconds left to retrieve the codes! He stands at the summit of Courage Cliff.

From here, he can see everything. He spots the bag containing the secret codes at the cliff's edge! Danger Dan grasps his compact cannon. Five seconds left! He squints through the cannon's scope and takes aim. Three...two...one...FIRE!



He launches a piercing retrieval arrow into the entrance of the lair. The arrow shoots through the air with an elastic line attached to it.

BULL'S EYE!

It's a direct hit! The arrow pierces through the briefcase containing the secret documents. Everything is going according to Danger Dan's master plan.

The grappling hook clamped firmly onto the satchel's strap.

"Great shot!" cheered Melody.

Danny tapped the button. The wire retracted slightly and stopped short. The bag was stuck as its buckle had snagged on the beam. Danny pressed the button several times but the bag refused to budge. Desperately, he jabbed at the button and gave the wire a violent tug. The bag swung free but the momentum caused it to

slip from the hook's grip and fly through the air. Danny, Melody and Fraser-Brunner's jaws dropped as they watched the bag soar in the sky before landing with a flop right at their feet.

Victory is his! Danger Dan triumphs again!

Fraser-Brunner grabbed his bag from the ground and opened it. His delighted expression turned to dismay as he rummaged through it. "My sketchbook," he said resignedly. "It's gone!"

"What? No!" groaned Danny, thinking of all the trouble they had just gone through for nothing.

"The thief must have taken it out of the bag," said Fraser-Brunner, downcast. "It must be John's doing. He just appeared out of the blue one day and has been trying to steal my designs ever since. Now he has my proposal for the logo."

Danny started to say, "But it wasn't very goo—YOW!" Melody stomped on Danny's foot

to shut him up. She looked at Fraser-Brunner, worried that he might get offended again. Fraser-Brunner sighed. "I know what you were going to say. You know what? You're right. It wasn't very good. In fact, it was terrible. I never had much luck drawing flowers."

"Fish are so much more interesting than flowers," remarked Danny. "At least fish move! The pufferfish I saw at the aquarium were very cool. They had spines and could puff themselves up!"

Fraser-Brunner looked at Danny thoughtfully. "Fish? You know, you may be on to something there. Maybe I should ditch the idea of orchids and just go with fish. After all, Singapore is an island surrounded by the sea."

"Yes!" said Melody delightedly, seizing the opportunity. "What if you combine a lion with a fish? I'm sure you're really good at drawing fish."


Fraser-Brunner nodded in agreement. "I'm thinking, maybe a lion's head with a fish's

body, like a mermaid. We can give it a name that combines 'lion' with 'mermaid'. I know, we can call it the...Lionmaid!"

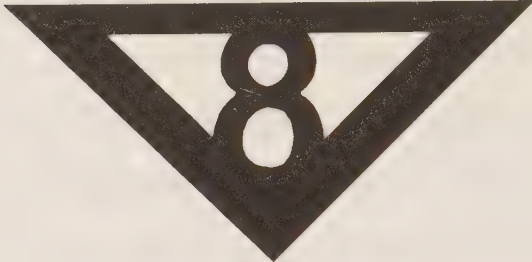
Danny groaned. "NOOOOOO!" he cried impatiently. "MERLION! Mermaid and lion, MERLION!"

Fraser-Brunner frowned, then smiled. "'Merlion' does have a nice ring to it." Fraser-Brunner bid Danny and Melody goodbye and strolled off the bridge. They could hear him mumbling to himself, "Merlion...not bad, not bad..."

The two children looked at each other and beamed. Mission accomplished!



CHAPTER



8

“It’s getting late,” said Melody. “I should get you back.”

“How will you do that?” asked Danny.

“Through the MRT train doors—they act as a portal. We’ve got to get back to the RI field. That’s where the future City Hall MRT station will be.”

After all that excitement, Danny suddenly realised that he was exhausted. Thinking about having to do more walking filled him

with dread. “Whaaatt?” he wailed. “I’m soooooooooo tired!”

“Well, that’s too bad,” said Melody shortly. “I don’t have any more money for trishaw rides.” They walked back down Queen Elizabeth Walk. Thankfully, the afternoon heat had given way to a cool evening breeze. The path was a lot more crowded with many couples taking a casual stroll along the river or sitting on the stone benches.

“How will I explain to my mother that I was gone for so long?” asked Danny, looking at his watch. “It’s almost 6pm now! She will wonder what happened to me.”

“That’s no problem,” replied Melody. “This is time travel, remember? I can put you back on the same train you came in. It will be like you never left.”

“That’s no good either,” said Danny. “There were people chasing me on that train! I’m in no hurry to see them again.”





“Well, alright then. I’ll put you on the train after that one.”

Right then, Danny remembered that he was supposed to deliver a package. “Grandma!” he exclaimed, looking down at his two empty hands. All he had was the sling bag at his side. The bag containing the package of herbs was gone. He couldn’t even remember when or where he had lost it. “Ohhhh,” moaned Danny, “Mum is going to kill me!”

Melody looked amused. “Sorry. I can’t help you with that.” They walked in silence for a few minutes. Then Melody cleared her throat and said, “I want to thank you, Danny. You were actually quite useful...”

“I know! You couldn’t have completed the mission without me,” said Danny cockily.

“...but only at times...”

Danny boasted, “I’m great! I’m fantastic!”

“...when you were not annoying...”

Danny whooped and danced about childishly.

“...WHICH WAS MOST OF THE TIME!”

Danny ignored Melody and continued prancing around.

“Okay, forget I said anything!” snapped Melody. Danny suddenly had a thought and stopped in his tracks. “Since I was so helpful, can you give me a gadget to bring back home?” he asked.

“What? No!”

“Pleeeeeeease!” begged Danny. “Life will be so boring compared to what we did this afternoon. At least give me something to remember my adventure.”

“I’m pretty sure if I give you something, you will create trouble back home,” said Melody. “I don’t want to be responsible for that.”

“Then I’ll tell everyone what happened!” threatened Danny.

“What? You insufferable boy!” fumed Melody. “That’s blackmail! Anyway, nobody will believe you.”

Danny tried flattery. "Please, Melody. Nice Gadget Girl. Just one teeny, tiny gadget. I won't tell anyone. I promise."

Melody relented. "Alright, alright." She unzipped a small pocket on the side of her skirt and fished out a stick of gum. "Here."

"Chewing gum?" asked Danny. "I love gum but it's banned in Singapore!"

"It's not chewing gum. It's melting gum," said Melody. "It can melt any material—wood, plastic, metal, you name it, but it's safe on human skin. To use it, you mash it together until it's gummy, then you stick it on whatever you wish to melt. Within 15 minutes, the material will dissolve. One-time use only." She cautioned, "Don't try to eat it! It will melt all your teeth!"

Danny accepted the stick of gum, thrilled. "That's really cool. Thanks, Gadget Girl."

They arrived back at Raffles Institution and walked to the field which was now empty and

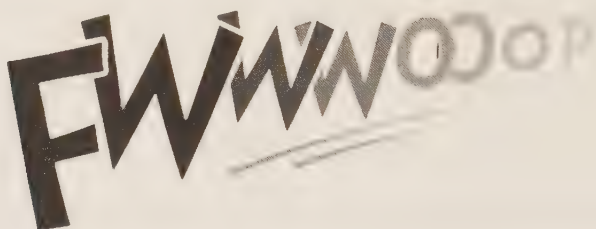
deserted. "Okay, this is it," said Melody. "Are you ready?"

"I guess so," replied Danny, unsure of what to expect.

"Goodbye then," said Melody pleasantly. "Thanks again." She traced the outline of an archway with her finger. It left a faint blue glow. Melody gave Danny a gentle push through the portal.



Danny remembered a question he wanted to ask and blurted out, “Will I ever see you again?” but it was too late.



In an instant, Danny found himself back on an MRT train, right by the door. The people around him didn't seem to notice that he had just appeared out of the blue. He looked down at the stick of melting gum in his hand and grinned to himself.



As expected, Danny received the how-could-you-be-so-irresponsible lecture from his mother when he returned home. He bore the scolding like a man but inside, he felt terribly misunderstood. He had just saved the nation from Orchid de Lionhead and this was how he

was being repaid! The only thing that kept him from arguing back was the fact that he had made a promise to Melody. Superheroes always kept their promises.

Danny held on to the hope that Melody would bring him back for another adventure soon. In the meantime, he would have some fun with the souvenir from Gadget Girl.

Danger Dan treks through the dense jungle, hunting down the Colossal Candy-saurus that had viciously smashed his precious jeep. He is out for revenge. Danger Dan follows the dinosaur's massive footprints deep into the heart of the jungle. He finds the Colossal Candy-saurus' favourite rock. The Colossal Candy-saurus is out looking for a meal but it will soon be back. Danger Dan sneaks up to the gigantic rock.

He puts on his acid-proof gloves and pulls the acid strip from his pocket, carefully removing the wrapper. Danger Dan crushes the acid strip, slaps

it onto the bottom of the rock and retreats to hide behind a large bush. If the Colossal Candy-saurus sees him, it will crunch him with its vicious jaws. A slimy green ooze forms as the acid strip melts. The green ooze seeps slightly into the rock and starts bubbling.

Suddenly, the ground starts to shake and tremble. The Colossal Candy-saurus is back! It lumbers over and hauls itself up onto the rock. The rock shivers a little but the Colossal Candy-saurus doesn't seem to notice.

CRACK!

A huge crevice forms in the middle of the rock and it crumbles, trapping the Colossal Candy-saurus!

The entire seat of Candy's revolving chair had given way and she plopped right into the large hole that had formed beneath her.

Her legs flew up towards the ceiling and her knees kissed her face. She waved her arms wildly and kicked her legs, trying unsuccessfully to haul herself out of her broken chair frame. It was a comical sight.



Danny jumped out from behind the door and spun Candy's chair as hard as he could. With Candy still kicking and screaming, the chair twirled like a mini tornado before it finally slowed down and stopped. "Okay! Okay!" screeched Candy, looking dizzy. "I'm sorry I broke your toy car! I'll get you another one, okay? Now, get me out of here!"

"YES!" hooted Danny. "I am the Ultimate Candy Crusher!"

The Colossal Candy-saurus is defeated! The jungle is safe once more, thanks to Danger Dan!





DANGER DAN'S FASCINATING FACTS

1

Alec Fraser-Brunner was the curator of the Van Kleeef Aquarium when he created the Merlion for the Singapore Tourism Board logo in 1964. He was probably a much smarter man in real life than we made him out to be in the book. Blame it on the time warp!

2

Quah Kim Song was Singapore's star footballer in the 1970s. His nickname was the Mercurial Speed Demon (in other words, he was very, very fast!) He studied at Raffles Institution during his pre-university days and during that time, the school football team was pretty much unbeatable.



3

The entire site where Raffles City Shopping Centre and City Hall MRT station are now used to be Raffles Institution (RI). Since the MRT station is underground, Danny should technically have emerged like a zombie from beneath the RI field. But we thought that might be too creepy for a children's book.

4

Van Kleef Aquarium was a popular tourist attraction in the 1960s and 1970s. Ask your parents! Chances are they went on a school excursion to the aquarium. It used to be one of the best aquariums in the world, with 6,500 marine creatures when it opened. We apologise to all who worked at the aquarium for making them sound mean and grumpy. No starfish were harmed by ice balls in the writing of this book.

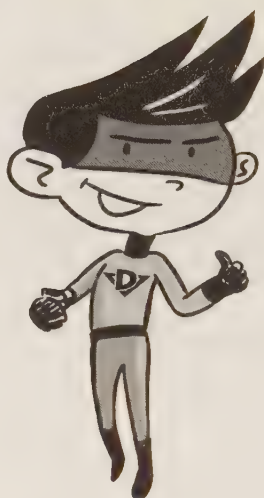


5

The Queen Elizabeth Walk underpass was brand new in 1964. It was the first-ever pedestrian underpass in Singapore! Though it looks somewhat different, Queen Elizabeth Walk is still there today. So are Victoria Theatre, the clock tower and Cavenagh Bridge. The building around which Melody chased the thief is now the Asian Civilisations Museum. It'd be pretty cool if you traced Danger Dan and Gadget Girl's path during the chase. Please don't throw anything over Cavenagh Bridge though.



About the Characters



Name Danny aka Danger Dan

Age 11 (but often behaves like he's eight)

Distinctive feature Big ears

Signature items *Fantasy Squad* comic book.
Red sling bag.

Likes Anything cold and sweet.
All of Melody's gadgets.
Comic books and superheroes.

Dislikes His three older sisters.
Vegetables in any form.
Cockroaches, especially big, flying ones.

Strengths Imaginative. Brave. Acts quickly in any situation.

Weaknesses Doesn't think before he acts. A magnet for trouble (and danger).



Name Melody aka Gadget Girl

Age 14 (in the year 2135)

Distinctive feature Silvery voice

Signature items Silver hair clip (actually a mega computer which also conveniently keeps her hair in place).
Grappling hook watch.

Likes Gooley Gooberberry Gummies in all flavours except Coconut Explosion.
Virtual jetpack tennis.

Dislikes Danny being annoying. Birds.

Strengths Smart. Usually calm (unless with Danny). Able to think under pressure.

Weaknesses Terrible aim. Sometimes a little bossy.

About the Authors



Monica Lim and Lesley-Anne Tan are a mother-daughter writing team (in that order). If Lesley-Anne could have a super power, she would choose the ability to stop time, so that she can study and write books in no time at all. Monica's preferred super power is mind control, so that she can make Lesley-Anne stop dreaming about time freezes and get back to work.

About the Illustrator



James Tan is an illustrator living in the western part of Singapore. He likes to draw animals and loves cats. He enjoys reading and drawing, garnering inspiration from daily life and travelling. James' most heroic acts involve saving snails from being crushed by joggers and cyclists when he goes for walks.

A SNEAK PREVIEW OF ISSUE #2

DANGER DAN



TACKLES THE MAJULAH MAYHEM

The driver of the truck hit the brakes and it came to a sudden halt. A few cages toppled out of the back of the truck and the cage doors flew open.

SPLASH!

Embracing their newfound freedom, chickens tumbled out onto the flooded road. Squawking and flapping their wings, they floundered in the water. Feathers flew everywhere.

Some people from a nearby coffee shop dashed out into the rain to help the fallen

motorcyclist. The man from the truck ran around trying to gather his sodden chickens.

“Melody, Melody, Melody!” spluttered Danny urgently. “Girl! Girl! Girl!”

Melody turned to her left, where Danny was pointing frantically. There was a large open drain by the side of the shophouses. It was overflowing and water was spewing from its banks. A strong current swept away leaves and debris.

Then Melody saw her. A young girl was in the rushing water, clutching on desperately to the edge of the storm drain.

TUNE IN NEXT TIME WHEN

DANGER DAN



TACKLES THE MAJULAH MAYHEM

Danger Dan and Gadget Girl are back together for another time-travelling adventure, involving riots, a musician, spicy noodles and a giant cockroach! Say whaaat?

In *Danger Dan Tackles the Majulah Mayhem*, it's up to Danny and Melody to save the composer of the national anthem from giving up on music. But the time warp appears to be more sinister than Danger Dan initially thought. What is the real story behind these time glitches?

"A fun and funny adventure! An exciting debut!"

- Adeline Foo, author of *The Diary of Amos Lee* series

**"Warning: Danger Dan is dangerously fun.
A solid hit. Kids, parents and even teachers
will love this book!"**

- David Seow, author of *Sam, Sebbie and Di-Di-Di* series



PSST! PAY ATTENTION: ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD DANNY IS ABOUT TO START HIS SECRET LIFE. AND YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TELL ANYONE, OR WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN? A STRANGE TIME WARP IS ALREADY MESSING UP SINGAPORE. BIG TIME. BUT DON'T WORRY. DANNY IS ABOUT TO TRANSFORM INTO DANGER DAN—THE ONLY BOY SUPERHERO WHO CAN SAVE US ALL!

IN DANGER DAN CONFRONTS THE MERLION MASTERMIND,

**DANGER DAN MEETS MELODY,
A MYSTERIOUS GIRL FROM THE
FUTURE. THEY HAVE TO RACE
AGAINST TIME TO ENSURE THE
MERLION DOESN'T END UP WITH
ORCHIDS AROUND ITS HEAD!
SOUNDS EASY? NOT WHEN YOU
SEE THE ODDS THEY'RE FACING...**



**WATCH OUT FOR
DANGER DAN TACKLES THE MAJULAH MAYHEM
AS THE ADVENTURES OF DANGER DAN CONTINUE!**

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